

FLIGHT JACKET

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Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif.

June 9, 2006



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HMH-462 trains at NAS Fallon



A CH-53E with Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 462, Marine Aircraft Group 11, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, also known as the 'Heavy Haulers,' hovers above the desert during a training evolution May 23. The 'Heavy Haulers' conducted various training missions with over 140 hours of flight. SEE RELATED STORY, PAGE 3. Photo courtesy of Cpl. Juan E. Ruvalcaba

Terrorist death brings opportunity

Story by Army Sgt. Sara Wood
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON – The death of terrorist leader Abu Musab al Zarqawi is a victory in the war on terror and is an opportunity for the Iraqi government to turn the tide of the struggle with insurgents, President George W. Bush said Thursday.

U.S. officials confirmed Thursday that Zarqawi died in a coalition military strike north of Baghdad during Wednesday evening. Army Gen. George W. Casey Jr., commander of Multinational Force Iraq, announced Zarqawi's death during a press conference with Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki and U.S. Ambassador to Iraq Zalmay Khalilzad.

"Zarqawi has met his end, and this violent man will never murder again," Bush said from the White House. "Iraqis can be justly proud of their new government and its early steps to improve their security."

Zarqawi was the operational commander of the terrorist operations in Iraq and was responsible for car bombings, assassinations and suicide attacks that took the lives of many American servicemembers and thou-

sands of innocent Iraqis, Bush said. Zarqawi personally beheaded American hostages and other civilians in Iraq, masterminded the destruction of the U.N. headquarters in Baghdad, and was responsible for the assassination of an American diplomat in Jordan and the bombing of a hotel in Amman, he said.

"Through his every action, he sought to defeat America and our coalition partners, and turn Iraq into a safe haven from which al Qaeda could wage its war on our free nations," he said. "To achieve these ends, he worked to divide Iraqis and incite civil war."

Coalition and Iraqi forces have worked tirelessly to catch Zarqawi through years of near misses and false leads, and have displayed courage and professionalism while pursuing the "brutal terrorist," Bush said.

"Last night, their persistence and determination were rewarded," he said. "On behalf of all Americans, I congratulate our troops on this remarkable achievement."

Although Zarqawi is dead, the difficult mission in Iraq continues and Americans can expect more sectarian violence, Bush said. But the terrorist movement has lost

Abu Musad Al-Zarqawi DEAD



one of its most visible leaders, and Zarqawi's death gives the Iraqi government an opportunity to make progress against insurgents, he said.

With Zarqawi's death and the completion of cabinet assignments — to include the ministers of defense and interior — announced Thursday by Maliki, Iraq is ready to move forward toward its goals of reconciliation, reconstruction and an end to violence, Bush said.

Maliki is determined to defeat the terrorists and bring the rule of law to Iraqi people, and he will have the full support of the U.S. as he moves forward, Bush said.

SEE ZARQAWI,
page 5



Maj. Gen. Samuel T. Helland
Commanding General
3rd Marine Aircraft Wing



Col. Paul C. Christian
Commanding Officer
MCAS Miramar

Maj. Jason A. Johnston
Public Affairs Director

Capt. Al Eskalis
Public Affairs Deputy Director

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San Diego, CA 92126, or (858) 547-7343.

Pace addresses core values

Story by Donna Miles

American Forces Press Service

SINGAPORE, – The chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff told U.S. Marines stationed here today the ongoing investigations of events in Haditha, Iraq, present an opportunity for all service members “to revisit ourselves and see where we are on our moral compass.”

Gen. Peter Pace, the first Marine to become the highest-ranking U.S. military officer, shared his thoughts with members of Marine Corps Detachment Singapore after stopping between sessions at a security conference here to thank them for their service.

Asked his thoughts about news coverage of the alleged Haditha incident, Pace told the group he supports the new ethics training requirement for deployed troops and believes it supports “what 99 percent of Marines are doing right.”

The training emphasizes “core values - who we are and what we do,” and encourages military members to reevaluate themselves, the chairman said.

Pace acknowledged that as the investigations unfold, there's likely to be “a bumpy road” ahead.

The general, here for the Asia Security Conference known as the Shangri-La Dialogue, thanked the Marine security guards assigned to the U.S. Embassy “for who you are and what you represent.”

The Marines’ presence and capability brings “great comfort” to the embassy staff and a positive example of the U.S. military’s professionalism, the chairman said. “Thank you for all that you do,” he said.

Asked about his World War II-era eagle-globe-and-anchor insignia, Pace told the group he wears them to remember the Marines who served before him and paved the way for him to become the first



Marine to achieve his position.

“I recognize I’m standing on the shoulders of some real giants of the corps,” he said. “I did not get here on my own. I represent 230-plus years of Marine Corps history.”

Sgt. James Gorczynski said it felt good to hear Pace’s views of the Iraq investigation firsthand and his belief in the benefit of the new ethics training requirement. “It concentrates on our core values, and that’s a constant in our training, from Day One,” Gorczynski said.

Staff Sgt. Zachary Peters called the general’s comments “very motivational” and said meeting Pace personally confirmed all he’d heard. “It’s one thing to hear about him, but it doesn’t really take hold until you see the man in person,” he said.

Editor’s note: As a new addition to the Flight Jacket, each month will feature a section on Marine Corps history, values and traditions

This Month in Marine Corps History

June 8, 1995

A Marine tactical recovery team from the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit stationed on board the USS Kearsarge rescued downed Air Force Capt. Scott O’Grady, from Bosnian-Serb territory in Bosnia.

June 12, 1961

President John F. Kennedy signed a Presidential Proclamation calling for the American flag to be flown at the Marine Corps War Memorial in Arlington, Va., “at all times during the day and night.” Discussions between the Attorney General’s office and Marine Corps officials earlier in 1961 on improving the visibility and appearance of the monument led to the proposal to fly the Flag continuously, which by law could only be done by Congressional legislation or by Presidential proclamation.

June 20, 1993

The 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit returned to Mogadishu, Somalia, to stand ready to assist United Nations forces in maintaining peace in the war-torn country. Earlier that month, the 24th MEU had been ordered to cut short Exercise Eager Mace 93-2 in Kuwait to respond to possible contingency operations in Somalia.

June 26, 1918

Brig. Gen. James G. Harbord, the Commanding General of the 4th Marine Brigade, notified American Expeditionary Force Headquarters that Belleau Wood was “now U.S. Marine Corps entirely.” After 20 days of combat, and at a cost of over 4,000 casualties, the 4th Brigade of Marines had proven its fighting heart. The grateful Commander of the French Sixth Army would soon decree that in all official correspondence, Belleau Wood would henceforth bear the name, “Bois de la Brigade de Marine.”

Miramarks

Why is it important to remember our core values?



Sgt. Ameedah Kragh
Support Equipment Asset Manager
VMFAT-101

“They are what set Marines apart. We are held accountable at the highest levels. Our values and discipline make Marines a great fighting force.”



Pfc. Ryan Peacock
Radio Operator
MACG-38

“They are important because Marines also serve as role models for many people around the world.”

Briefs

2006 Spring HRST Visit

The Headquarters Recruiter Screening Team will be holding a screening for recruiting duty June 22 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., at the Marine Corps Air Station Miramar Staff non-commissioned Officers club.

Applicants must report in the service “C” uniform with service record book and health records.

For more information, contact your unit career retention specialist.

Marine Security Guard

For all Marines stationed on MCAS Miramar that currently have orders to or are interested in assignment to Marine Security Guard Duty, there will be a screening June 26, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Bob Hope Theater. The uniform of the day will be Service “C”. For more information contact your Career Retention Specialist.

CMC to Visit Marine Bases

Gen. Michael W. Hagee, commandant of the Marine Corps, will address Marines in a series of events in the U.S. and abroad over the next several weeks. The purpose of his visits will be to reinforce the ideals, values and standards for Marines. The CMC’s remarks will focus on the value and meaning of honor, courage and commitment.

Dates for visits will be announced through commands.

Prescribed Burns

The Marine Corps Air Station Miramar Fire Department will be conducting prescribed burns throughout the month of June in preparation of fire season. These fires eliminate hazardous fuels and will help reduce the wildfire risk.

Illegal Drug Conference

On behalf of the Drug Demand Reduction Program, the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment and Marine Corps Community Services, a special Methamphetamines Conference will be held June 29, from 8 a.m., to 4 p.m., in Building 8630.

For more information, call 577-4411.

Recruiters Assistance

Earn extra promotion points by assisting recruiters in the Tennessee area.

Recruiters assistants are needed at Recruiting Station Nashville, Tenn., for the areas of Memphis, Jackson, Nashville, Chattanooga, Knoxville and Northern Alabama.

For more information call (615) 627-1526, Ext. 229



Maj. Kevin Cortez, naval air training and operations procedures standardization safety officer, Marine Heavy Helicopter 462, Marine Aircraft Group 11, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, performs a preflight safety check May 23. HMH-462 flew to Naval Air Station Fallon, Nev., and conducted various training missions with over 140 hours of flight. Photo courtesy of Cpl. Juan E. Ruvalcaba

‘Heavy Haulers’ back at it again

Story by Lance Cpl. George J. Papastrat
MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

Ten days of intense, defensive maneuvering with over 140 hours of flight, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing pilots took to the sky.

Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 462, Marine Aircraft Group 11, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, flew to Naval Air Station Fallon Nev., May 15-25 to conduct training missions with six helicopters and more than 120 Marines from their squadron.

During the ten day period, the Marines worked intensely through day and night.

“The primary mission was focused on qualifying two of our pilots and one crew chief to become a night systems Instructors,” said Capt. Joseph O. Campomanes, current operations officer and a weapons tactics instructor, HMH-462. “We faced some obstacles with weather, but we persevered.”

Along with the primary mission, the squadron conducted defensive measure

training against the F-18 Hornet and the Navy F-5E Tiger II.

“It was great training and it went well,” said Campomanes. “We flew against some very capable platforms.”

Naval Air Station Fallon is the home of the Navy Top Gun School, where some of the best pilots in the world train.

“We flew with some of the units stationed at Top Gun,” said Campomanes. “The pilots flew Naval Helicopters and jets, as well as Marine F-18’s which were on detachment at Fallon.”

Training is imperative for Marines; they are always the first to fight.

The CH-53E is a heavy lifting helicopter used by the Marine Corps, and is the largest helicopter in the military; its main mission is transportation of heavy equipment, supplies and personnel.

“We also lifted a Huey,” said Campomanes. “The CH-53 is capable of single and dual point external lifting.

However, none of our training would have been possible if it weren’t for the dedicated maintainers keeping our aircraft up.”

The CH-53E can hold two side door 50 caliber automatic machineguns to provide medium range suppression fire. While conducting their training at NAS Fallon, the ‘Heavy Haulers’ flew through the aerial gun ranges shooting more than 20,000 .50 Cal. rounds, said Campomanes. “We had them mounted in both side doors as well as the rear ramp.”

“It was great to shoot the .50 Cal.,” said Lance Cpl. James Whitney, Crew Chief, HMH-462. “When we first got there, we flew a familiarization flight around the area. I flew more than 20 hours over the training evolution.”

“We also externally lifted a truck size dumpster that was so heavy you could feel the bird sway in the air,” said Whitney. “It was great training. I would love to do it again.”



Petty Officer 2nd Class Martin Stanisz (left), Chief Petty Officer Bill Breeding (center), and Command Master Chief Petty Officer Michael Ruiz (right), fleet marine force and sea warfare qualified hospital corpsmen, surgeon's office, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, evaluate sailors in Iraq on their knowledge of the Marine Corps via the video telecommunication system at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar. The sailors are on a board to receive the Fleet Marine Force designation pin. *Photo by Lance Cpl. Scott T. McAdam Jr.*

Sailors participate in 'virtual board'

Story by **Lance Cpl. Scott T. McAdam Jr.**

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

Sailors in Iraq participated in a board May 31, for their Fleet Marine Force designation pins at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar.

The sailors were able to take part in the board via Miramar's video teleconferencing system.

The system allows a satellite uplink for communication with as little as a one second delay.

"These boards we have run through the video teleconferencing system are the first ones done in the air wing," said Chief Petty Officer Bill Breeding, fleet marine force and sea warfare qualified hospital corpsman, surgeon's office, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing. "Because the command master chief is here, we are using this system to qualify our wing sailors who are forward."

The FMF designation is a symbol worn on the sailor's uniform that signifies the in depth knowledge of their brother service the Marine Corps. Most of the recipients of the designator are corpsmen; however, it is open to other military occupational fields.

The knowledge the sailors are expected to learn encompasses everything from five paragraph orders and salute reports to general orders and weapons information

taught to fledgling Marines in boot camp and Marine Combat Training.

"The designator is in the spirit of keeping with the Marine Corps mindset that everyone is a rifleman and that everyone has a general understanding on how to do a Marine's job should the situation arise," said Breeding. "These boards help us develop their leadership skills and grow their warrior sailor within."

It takes great dedication to receive this designation. Sailors spend months studying and preparing for the board. The information the sailors are expected to retain is often even more in depth than the information most Marines are required to know.

"The information I have acquired is more in depth than the information I was required to know when I was a Marine," said Petty Officer 3rd Class Jules Degraff, corpsman, Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 268, Marine Aircraft Group 39, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing (Forward) and former Marine.

"Learning this information has already been a great benefit to me," Petty Officer 2nd Class Erik Cardaway, Marine Wing Support Squadron 374, Marine Wing Support Group 37, 3rd MAW. "As a corpsman I live side by side with Marines day in and day out."

Wearing the designator shows Marines and sailors that the sailor has dedicated time and effort learning about the Marine Corps.

The FMF designator is considered a high honor in the Navy. Out of the entire Navy, there are only 9,000 sailors who have earned the honor of wearing the FMF designator.



The Fleet Marine Force designation pin, as seen here on a sailor's uniform, certifies their dedicated time and effort to learn about their brother service the Marine Corps. *Photo by Lance Cpl. Robert W. Beaver*

Bush: Terrorist al-Zarqawi is dead

Editor's Note: The following is a speech by President George W. Bush, delivered June 8 from the Rose Garden at the White House, Washington D.C.

Good morning. Last night in Iraq, United States military forces killed the terrorist al Zarqawi. At 6:15 p.m. Baghdad time, special operation forces, acting on tips and intelligence from Iraqis, confirmed Zarqawi's location, and delivered justice to the most wanted terrorist in Iraq.

Zarqawi was the operational commander of the terrorist movement in Iraq. He led a campaign of car bombings, assassinations and suicide attacks that has taken the lives of many American forces and thousands of innocent Iraqis. Osama bin Laden called this Jordanian terrorist "the prince of al Qaeda in Iraq." He called on the terrorists around the world to listen to him and obey him. Zarqawi personally beheaded American hostages and other civilians in Iraq. He masterminded the destruction of the United Nations headquarters in Baghdad. He was responsible for the assassination of an American diplomat in Jordan, and the bombing of a hotel in Amman.

Through his every action, he sought to defeat America and our coalition partners, and turn Iraq into a safe haven from which al Qaeda could wage its war on free nations. To achieve these ends, he worked to divide Iraqis and incite civil war. And only last week he released an audio tape attacking

Iraq's elected leaders, and denouncing those advocating the end of sectarianism.

Now Zarqawi has met his end, and this violent man will never murder again. Iraqis can be justly proud of their new government and its early steps to improve their security. And Americans can be enormously proud of the men and women of our armed forces, who worked tirelessly with their Iraqi counterparts to track down this brutal terrorist and put him out of business.

The operation against Zarqawi was conducted with courage and professionalism by the finest military in the world. Coalition and Iraqi forces persevered through years of near misses and false leads, and they never gave up. Last night their persistence and determination were rewarded. On behalf of all Americans, I congratulate our troops on this remarkable achievement.

Zarqawi is dead, but the difficult and necessary mission in Iraq continues. We can expect the terrorists and insurgents to carry on without him. We can expect the sectarian violence to continue. Yet the ideology of terror has lost one of its most visible and aggressive leaders.

Zarqawi's death is a severe blow to al Qaeda. It's a victory in the global war on terror, and it is an opportunity for Iraq's new government to turn the tide of this struggle. A few minutes ago I spoke to Prime Minister Maliki. I congratulated him on close collaboration between coalition and Iraqi forces that helped make this day possible. Iraq's

freely elected prime minister is determined to defeat our common enemies and bring security and the rule of law to all its people.

Earlier this morning he announced the completion of his cabinet appointments, with the naming of a new minister of defense, a new Minister of the Interior, and a new minister of state for national security. These new ministers are part of a democratic government that represents all Iraqis. They will play a vital role as the Iraqi government addresses its top priorities — reconciliation and reconstruction and putting an end to the kidnappings and beheadings and suicide bombings that plague the Iraqi people. I assured Prime Minister Maliki that he will have our full support.

On Monday I will meet with my national security team and other key members of my cabinet at Camp David to discuss the way forward in Iraq. Our top diplomats and military commanders in Iraq will give me an assessment of recent changes in the political and economic and security situation on the ground. On Tuesday, Iraq's new Ambassador to the United States will join us, and we will have a teleconference discussion with the prime minister and members of his cabinet. Together we will discuss how to best deploy America's resources in Iraq and achieve our shared goal of an Iraq that can govern itself, defend itself and sustain itself.

We have tough days ahead of us in Iraq that will require the continued patience of the American people. Yet the developments of

the last 24 hours give us renewed confidence in the final outcome of this struggle: the defeat of terrorism threats, and a more peaceful world for our children and grandchildren.

May God bless the Iraqi people and may God continue to bless America.

ZARQAWI, continued from page 1

The president said he will meet with his national security team and other key members of his cabinet June 12 to discuss recent changes in the political, economic and security situations in Iraq. On Tuesday, Iraq's new ambassador to the U.S. will meet with the Bush administration team and will participate in a teleconference with Maliki and his Cabinet to talk about the way forward in Iraq, he said.

"Together we will discuss how to best deploy America's resources in Iraq, and achieve our shared goal of an Iraq that can govern itself, defend itself and sustain itself," Bush said.

"The developments of the last 24 hours give us renewed confidence in the final outcome of this struggle, the defeat of terrorism threats, and a more peaceful world for our children and grandchildren."



Marines with Aircraft, Rescue and Firefighting, Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, subdue a controlled fire May 23 at a burn training area at MCAS Miramar. The ARFF Marines train in these conditions to prepare themselves for any situation that may occur.

Marines control night-live burns

Story and Photos by Lance Cpl. George J. Papastrat

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

Engulfed by flames and enduring incredible heat, Marines with Aircraft, Rescue and Firefighting, pushed back a blazing inferno May 23 while conducting a crash fire rescue live night-fire burn.

Marines with specialized training provide fire fighting techniques to ensure that when an emergency happens, the training kicks in and they go to work.

“We try to do this type of training at least two times a month,” said Gunnery Sgt. Chad Nordberg, second section leader, crash fire rescue, Marine Corps Air Station Miramar. “This prepares Marines for fire fighting techniques in case of a crash on the flight line.”

Crash fire rescue Marines are trained in various tasks, such as fire fighting, aircraft rescue, and recovery of personnel trapped in burning aircraft.

“We either work a 24 or a 48 hour shift while on duty,” said Nordberg. “During their shift they will have classes, PT, and aircraft checkouts (reviewing the different type of aircraft so the Marines are familiar with it).”

Like any training exercise there must be preparation and behind the scenes work previous to the event.

“The day before the live burn, we will do “wet runs,” which is when the crash

see **BURN,**
page 7



Two Marines with Aircraft, Rescue and Firefighting, Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, rush toward a controlled test fire May 23 at a fire training area at MCAS Miramar. The Marines used high pressure hoses to reduce the flames.

BURN
continued from page 6

crew does the fire drill without the fire,” he said.

“The morning of the burn we will have a bunker gear inspection,” he said. “It is important to make sure the Marines have properly functioning personal protective equipment ... if anything is wrong with it we will fix it.”

The blood sweat and tears the Marines put into this work is second to none.

“This is our bread and butter (referring to the live burning exercises), when an emergency happens, our training kicks in,” said Staff Sgt. Giacarlo Pinero, assistant section leader, crash fire rescue, MCAS Miramar. “It’s a lot of work and excitement ... applying all the techniques we have learned.”

Any type of training Marines do, will some how relate to what they will do while in combat.

“Our live burn training is like a grunt doing close quarters battle contact training, it is imperative for our job,” said Warrant Officer Bill T. Waugaman, training pit safety officer, MCAS Miramar. “This type of training has total relevance to what these Marines would do in an emergency in Iraq; they feel the heat, and the pressure.”

After hours of preparation, classes and training, MCAS Miramar crash crew marines lit up the night sky. These Marines train with live burns, preparing themselves for the unexpected.



Staff Sgt. Giacarlo Pinero, assistant section leader, crash fire rescue, Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, adjusts the fuel into the burn pit May 23. These Marines will participate in a controlled night burn to practice techniques needed for an emergency.

ALSS Marines ensure Viper pilots' safety

Story by Cpl. Jonathan K. Teslevich

3rd Marine Aircraft Wing

AL TAQADDUM, Iraq — Marine air crews rely on the work of a small community of technicians to safely fly in support of ground troops who are engaging insurgent forces, survive potential crashes or need to reach friendly forces.

The Marines with the Aviation Life Support Systems section, Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 169, Marine Aircraft Group 16 (Reinforced), 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing (Forward), are responsible for maintaining the personalized flight equipment, survival gear and onboard environmental systems for the squadron's pilots and crew chiefs flying UH-1N Huey and AH-1W Super Cobra helicopters.

"We keep records for each individual aircrew member, on everything they are issued because it is all individualized from their helmets to their gloves," said Gunnery Sgt. Joseph M. Miley. "The gear includes many other things; night-vision goggles, personal flotation items, survival vests and radios. We'll repair, modify and maintain those items. All of the above makes it a constant operation from 7-day inspections to annual inspections of the gear."

Prior to their flights, the crewmembers must go to the ALSS shop to checkout their

flight equipment. Inside a 20-foot-long shipping container, the pilots or crew chiefs' equipment is stored on its own shelf marked with their last names.

"We are actually the aircrews' last chance, or rather, the gear we provide is the crewmembers' last chance surviving the ditching or crashing of an aircraft," said Miley, staff noncommissioned officer-in-charge, ALSS.

According to the Tifton, Ga., native, the helmet and the survival vest are the items most commonly worked on by ALSS.

"As far as the helmets and communication goes, we work on anything that connects to it, like the boom microphone and earphones," said Miley. "We make sure it fits the aircrew member and that it has a good seal, so that the crewmember can hear the radios."

The term "survival vest" is appropriate as the green mesh garment holds anything and everything needed by a crewmember after surviving a crash.

"There's a lot to the survival vest, which includes the radio itself, survival drinking water, lenzatic compasses, survival knives, flares and a medical kit," said Miley. "We work on the radios at least once a week, reprogramming all 85 of them."

The ALSS section's six enlisted Marines



Marines assigned to the Aviation Life Support System section for Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 169, Marine Aircraft Group 16 (Reinforced), 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing (Forward), here with a UH-1N Huey helicopter at Al Taqaddum, Iraq, May 13, 2006, maintain the personalized flight equipment, survival gear and onboard environmental systems. *Photo by Cpl. Jonathan K. Teslevich*

stay busy managing the personalized flight equipment, working 12-hour shifts.

However, their duties are not limited to the crew's gear, as they are also responsible for environmental systems and cartridge actuated devices onboard the Cobras and Hueys. "The Cobra pilots can make adjustments to the (cooling and heating) system increasing or decreasing the airflow out the vents and through the seat cushions, keeping themselves pretty cool," said Cpl. Sean W. Banks, a flight equipment technician and Reading, Pa., native. "The heat and dust are pretty rough on the system, but with maintenance, it will still blow chunks of ice if it's

turned all the way up."

Due to the large amount of flight hours put on each helicopter, the ALSS Marines need to constantly perform maintenance on the systems they are responsible for. To do so properly, they reference massive publication binders stored inside their shop. The publications explain step-by-step how to clean, repair and replace components that, together, make up the helicopter.

"Anytime we're doing maintenance, we reference the publications, because things change," said Miley. "Changes come out to the publications, telling us how to do the work, so there's never any guesswork."

VMFA-232 ‘Red Devils’ change command

Story by Lance Cpl. Scott T. McAdam Jr.
MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

Lt. Col. Douglas S. Kurth relinquished command of Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 232, Marine Aircraft Group 11, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, to Lt. Col. Hunter H. Hobson during a change of command ceremony May 26 at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar.

Under Kurth’s command, VMFA-232 successfully made the transformation into carrier-based operations under the Tactical Air Integration plan.

“I couldn’t be more proud of the way the Marines and sailors performed over the past 22 months,” said Kurth.

“They exceeded my goals and expectations. The Red Devils are poised to set the standard for carrier aviation.”

Under Kurth’s command in theater, the unit had no ground, or flight-related mishaps during the transition from expeditionary to shipboard operations.

Kurth continued to display imaginative and cost-effective guidance as he pushed for the entire squadron to support the Weapons Tactics Instructor course Marine Corps Air Station Yuma, Ariz.

“Lt. Col Kurth’s positive impact has set the foundation for the Marines and sailors of the Red Devils to continue to improve and excel as a carrier-based squadron while maintaining their expeditionary heritage,” said Sgt. Maj. Sandra Torres-Pintos, sergeant major, VMFA-232.

“We are looking forward to carrying on these traits with our new leadership coming in.”

After graduating from Illinois State University in May of 1989, Hobson received his commission in the Marine Corps.

Hobson was selected to join the U.S. Navy Flight Demonstration Squadron in Pensacola, Fla. in September of 1999. Hobson performed in 74 air shows throughout North America for over two years.

Hobson rejoined the “Death Rattlers” in November 2003 and served as the squadron operations officer and executive officer during a six-month, around-the-world deployment aboard the USS Carl Vinson.

During his deployment Hobson flew combat missions



Lt. Col. Douglas S. Kurth (center), relinquishes command May 26 of Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 232, Marine Aircraft Group 11, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, to Lt. Col. Hunter H. Hobson(right), while Sgt. Maj. Sandra Torres-Pintos salutes during the ceremony at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar. Photo by Lance Cpl. Scott T. McAdam Jr.

in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom in the Persian Gulf.

Hobson’s personal awards include the Meritorious Service Medal with a gold star, Air Medal with three strike/flight awards, Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal, Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal and Combat Action Ribbon.

“VMFA-232 has an amazing history and has a proven record in combat,” said Hobson.

“I am excited and honored to lead the ‘Red Devils’ and look forward to the challenges and successes that lie ahead as we prepare for and execute another successful combat deployment.”

Military dogs adjust to desert climate



Petty Officer 2nd Class Andrew Sill holds off the fierce Military Working Dog Puck May 24 during a training exercise at Al Asad, Iraq. Sill is a MWD handler with Army Military Police Task Force, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry Regiment. Photo by Lance Cpl. James B. Hoke

Story by Lance Cpl. James B. Hoke

3rd Marine Aircraft Wing

AL ASAD, Iraq — The sand-filled air and scorching heat of Iraq creates hard conditions for the service members deployed to the war-torn country, and the environment is no less pleasing for the furry four-legged friends the Military Working Dogs and handlers who support them.

During a deployment, Army MWDs with Military Police Task Force, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry Regiment, play the exact same roles as the service members, as they get used to the climate of their new home away from home and carry out their missions to the best of their abilities.

“We have different dogs that do different things,” said Staff Sgt. Gregory S. Massey, regional kennel master of the western area of operations, Military Police Task Force. “Some find bombs, some find people, some find drugs and some do a combination thereof. A lot of the units take them on raids, route clearing and stuff like that.”

“They do a lot of different types of missions,” the 36-year-old native of Nashville, Tenn., continued. “On base, it is just like garrison back at home. It’s clearing for VIPs coming in. We can use

them for crowd control or moving people around, too.”

Between the Vietnam War and Operation Iraqi Freedom, the MWDs’ training did not focus as much on operational missions as they do today.

“It was mainly law enforcement,” said Massey, a Danahills High School graduate. “They just went out and did cop stuff, drug searches, bomb searches and normal MP patrols. So when this all began, we had to shift our training to focus more on the operating forces.”

Although the dogs are now in a combat environment where they perform mission after mission, they still maintain their training on a daily basis.

“Training is continuous so that you can keep the dogs sharp,” said Sgt. Alex M. Reeb, MWD handler, Military Police Task Force. “For the dogs, the work is the play, as they don’t understand the concept of work. To them, finding an (Improvised Explosive Device) is their play.”

According to Massey, the dogs prefer to be in a deployed environment more than their comfortable concrete kennels in the United States.

“They miss their family and don’t get paid the combat pay,” said Massey. “On a serious note, they actually like it better out here in a lot of ways. The climate is harder to get used to, but they get used to it. It is more of a home environment.

Right now, we have dogs inside, sleeping in beds with their handlers in their racks. Back in the States, they are sleeping in a nice kennel, but they are by themselves. So when they come out here, they are with their handler 24 hours a day, seven days a week.”

While the dogs are in Iraq, they form an extremely close bond with the main person who looks out for them, their handler.

“We use the term ‘Dog Team,’ as we’ve spent so much time with our dogs that it is pretty much one mind,” said Reeb, a 24-year-old native of San Angelo, Texas. “It’s not about who is the best handler or the best dog, but who is the best ‘Dog Team’”

While the dogs enjoy being deployed with their handlers to distant lands, they are still subject to combat stress.

“It was funny because we never attributed combat stress to dogs, but it does affect them,” said Massey. “We had a dog diagnosed with combat stress. Back home, we can only simulate the environments and situations so much. Some dogs are just like some people and shut down. Not very many, but it does happen.”

The dogs are most credited for the abilities they possess that help them complete their mission, as well as their morale building friendliness.

“They can do some amazing things,”

said Massey. “They can smell so much better than we can. They increase security for the base and individuals on patrol. They also build morale, as the units kind of adopt them. When they do find something, it may just be one bomb to save one Marine, but that is enough. They save lives.”



Military Working Dog Baro, an 8-year-old German Shepherd, searches for a hidden box of ammunition during a training exercise at Al Asad, Iraq, May 23. Baro is one of several MWDs deployed to Iraq, which carries out missions just like regular service members in the hot desert environment. Photo by Lance Cpl. James B. Hoke

Announcements



Is this your Boat?

The above vehicle has been marked for impound by the Provost Marshal’s Office. To avoid having the vehicle towed, please store it in the Marine Corps Community Services or Traffic Management Office lots. Abandoned vehicles at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar present security risks as well as environmental and safety concerns. PMS attempts to identify and contact vehicle owners of illegally parked, abandoned vehicles prior to tagging the vehicle with a Department of Defense notice. Vehicles are then scheduled for towing three days following the notice. For more information, call 577-1276/4139.

The following vehicles have been impounded and need to be claimed by the owners. Towing fees average \$113, storage fees \$28 daily. For more information call 577-1461.

Vehicle:	License:
Mitsubishi Eclipse	CA#5DAX061
Honda CX	CA#5ERW727
Suzuki GSXR	CA#17E7224
Ford E350	CA#4LNX778
Motorcycle Trailor	VA#CT497383

Miramar Movies

The Bob Hope Theater is located in Building 2242, and will be featuring the following movies. Outside food and drinks are not permitted. For more information, call 577-4143 or log on to www.mccsmiramar.com.

Friday:
6:30 p.m. The Sentinel (PG)
9:00 p.m. American Dreamz (PG-13)

Saturday:
6:30 p.m. The Wild (G)
9:00 p.m. The Benchwarmers (PG-13)

Sunday:
1:00 p.m. *Take The Lead (PG-13)
6:30 p.m. *Lucky Number Slevin (R)

Wednesday:
6:30 p.m. Silent Hill (R)

Thursday:
2:00 p.m. Akeelah And The Bee (PG)
6:30 p.m. *American Dreamz (PG-13)

* Indicates the last showing for that film.

San Diego County Fair

The San Diego County Fair is taking place at the Del Mar fair grounds from Saturday to July 4. Admission is free for service members and their families and \$9.10 for civilians.

For more information on the fair, contact the Marine Corps Air Station Miramar Entertainment Ticket Office at 577-4126.

Religious Services

The Chaplain’s Office is located in Building 5632 and coordinates regularly-scheduled worship services. For the location and meeting schedules of religious activities, contact the Chaplain’s Office at 577-1333.

Sunday:
9:30 a.m. Protestant worship service
11 a.m. Roman Catholic Eucharist

Wednesday:
7 p.m. Baptist service

Monday-Friday:
11:30 a.m. Roman Catholic daily mass

Jewish:
7 p.m. First Friday of the month MCRD
7:30 p.m. Last Friday at Edson Range Chapel

HMH-466 Change of Command

Lt Col. John H. Celigoy will relinquish command of Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 466, Marine Aircraft Group 11, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, to Lt. Col. Roger J. McFadden during a change of command ceremony Thursday at 2 p.m. at Hangar 4.

Deployed Kids’ Meetings

Deployed Kids’ Group will meet Mondays June 12, 19, 26, and July 10, 17, at 3:30 p.m. at the Miramar Youth and Teen Center. If a parent is deployed now, getting ready to deploy, or is returning, and the child is between 8-10, they are welcome. First timers come early to meet everyone.

For more information, call 577-1332.

Brig retirement ceremony

After 22 years of honorable service, Boatswain’s Mate Chief (Surface Warfare) Roger F. Price, U.S. Navy, will be retiring. The retirement ceremony will be held on June 16, at 11 a.m. in front of the Naval Consolidated Brig, Marine Corps Air Station Miramar. All Interested personnel are codially invited to attend. Uniform for attendees is the uniform of thr day.

For more information, call 577-7000.